

# Tips on Cover Letters

Here are some tips on cover letters:

- Always mail a cover letter with your résumé.
- Address the letter to the contact person or to the Human Resources Director.
- Use standard business letter format on paper that matches your résumé.
- Use white or off-white 8-1/2- x 11-inch paper.
- Cover Letters should be individually typed and signed.
- Use terms and phrases that are meaningful to the employer.
- Minimize jargon, abbreviations and contractions and be concise.
- Use a font size of 10 to 14 points.
- Use non-decorative typefaces. Choose one typeface and stick to it.
- Check your letter for errors and grammatical correctness.
- Print on one side of the paper.
- When sending a resume via email, include your cover letter in the body of the email or (depending upon the employer's instructions) send it with your résumé as an attachment.

While your résumé is a summary of your credentials, your cover letter can be an effective marketing tool. Your aim is to demonstrate why your education, work experience, skills, and background uniquely qualify you for the position you're applying for.

If you're wondering how you're going to write a cover letter, it can help to break the letter down into its various parts and concentrate on just one section at a time. Here's what goes into each of the three main sections of a cover letter:

## FIRST PARAGRAPH

- I identify the position for which you are applying.
- State how you learned of the position, and why you are interested in the position or organization.

## SECOND PARAGRAPH

- This is your opportunity to let the employer know that you are well qualified. Summarize why you are a strong candidate for the position.
- Target the job description and specifically discuss how your skills relate to the job requirements.
- Highlight one or two of your accomplishments or abilities that show you are an excellent candidate for this position.
- Detail positive characteristics and past experiences that illustrate how your qualifications will benefit this organization.

## CLOSING PARAGRAPH

- Thank the person for considering your résumé and offer to provide additional information.
- Include your phone number and when you can be reached.

1908 Anystreet  
Lansing, MI 48909  
June 18, 2001

Mary Smith  
Recruiter  
Department of ABC  
123 Main Street  
Anytown, MI 55555

Dear Ms. Smith:

I am writing in response to your posting on the State of Michigan Vacancy Posting site for the Personnel Management Analyst position. I believe my qualifications make me an excellent candidate for the position.

I possess more than seven years of human resources experience in recruitment and staffing, benefits administration, and workforce planning. Throughout my career I have demonstrated the ability to establish excellent client relationships and to develop and implement innovative solutions to address a wide variety of human resources challenges. I have excellent organizational abilities and strong decision-making skills.

Enclosed is my résumé for your review. I would appreciate the chance to meet with you to discuss the ways in which I can help the Department of ABC achieve its goals and objectives. I can be reached at the phone numbers listed on my résumé.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Iwant A. Job

Enclosure